



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Madison selected as site for new National Guard Civil Support Team

Governor Jim Doyle announced today that Madison has been selected as the site for the Wisconsin National Guard's new fulltime civil support team (CST).

Civil support teams assist local, state, and federal civil authorities in the event of an incident involving weapons of mass destruction in the United States. They are designed to deploy rapidly to aid local first responders in determining the nature of a weapons of mass destruction incident, provide medical and technical advice, and pave the way for follow-on state and federal response assets.

"The National Guard carefully studied 10 potential locations in order to recommend the site that made the most sense to protect Wisconsin from the effects of a weapons of mass destruction incident," Governor Doyle said. "I strongly concur with the Guard's recommendation that Madison is the best location for this unique unit."

Governor Doyle made the announcement following a briefing by the Homeland Security Council, which recommended the site.

The Wisconsin Guard's commanding officer, Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, appointed a task force to evaluate locations statewide. In addition to Army and Air National Guard officers, the task force included representatives from Wisconsin Emergency Management and accepted selection criteria recommendations from National Guard Bureau and a CST commander from another state. Wisconsin's multi-agency Homeland Security Council reviewed the analysis and formally concurred with the panel's recommendation.

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Madison will be site of Guard CST

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The CST task force compared potential locations against a number of objective criteria, including proximity to interstate highways and military airfields, access to military aircraft, population density, location of critical infrastructure, availability of existing National Guard facilities, and physical security considerations.

Madison was considered the best site among locations the task force studied.

The Defense Department announced in March that Wisconsin was one of 12 states chosen to establish new fulltime CSTs. Wisconsin's current unit, the 54th Civil Support Team, was created in Madison in 2000, but with mostly part-time personnel and little of the specialized equipment required to be fully capable of an effective response.

Once fully fielded, the 54th Civil Support Team will be one of 44 full-time CSTs in the nation. The 54th CST will consist of 22 highly skilled, fulltime members of the Army and Air National Guard who are federally resourced, trained and evaluated — but fall under the command and control of the governor of Wisconsin.

The 54th CST will operate from the Wisconsin National Guard's former state headquarters armory at 1420 Wright Street. The armory had been recently modified to accommodate the unit's unique requirements.

The Guard is currently filling the unit's 22 fulltime vacancies and awaiting the specialized vehicles, communication gear and analytical equipment. Certification of the unit is expected to take at least one year after the equipment is received and extensive training requirements for the unit's soldiers are met.

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